



## **State of Connecticut**

### **HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES STATE CAPITOL**

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#### **Public Safety and Security Committee**

#### **Public Hearing**

**Monday, March 18, 2013**

**Testimony In Support of,**

**HB 6597, An Act Creating The Civilian Medal Of Honor**

Good Evening Co-Chairs Senator Hartely, Representative Dargan and Ranking Members Senator Guglielmo and Representative Giegler and members of the Public Safety and Security Committee. I submitting testimony in support of HB 6597.

I would like to thank the committee for raising this bill which would create a process and a formal review panel for recognizing some of our bravest and most selfless citizens in Connecticut. The idea for a Civilian Medal of Honor was brought forward by a resident in East Hampton. After hearing of some of the acts performed in the wake of the natural disasters that we recently experienced, it was brought to my attention that we are lucky to have many citizens in our State who performed above and beyond the call. Yet, we did not recognize them in any official way.

It would be an honor for ordinary citizens who answer that call, be recognized while performing valorous and heroic deeds while saving a life or preventing injury in their community. Conceptually, this could work much like the Veterans Hall of Fame, when each year the committee selects at least ten nominees for induction. For example, a social worker who answered a crisis hotline and saved a teen from attempting suicide, a person who may have intervened in an Amber or Silver Alert or a CERT (Community Emergency Response Team) member who performed above the call of duty.

Currently, there is no way to officially recognize a member of the general public who volunteer in their communities in such meaningful ways. Like two other States who currently do so, I believe it is a concept that is worthwhile.

How wonderful it would be for the State of Connecticut to bestow on civilians this award and at minimal if any cost.

Thank you again for your time and your consideration of this bill.